

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

Inside Information

United States Department
of Agriculture

March 27, 1981

Office of Governmental
and Public Affairs

Volume 3

Washington, D.C.
20250

No. 15

USDA GRADUATE SCHOOL OFFERING COURSES

The USDA Graduate School is offering four courses this spring which may be of interest to information staff members in the Washington, D.C., area.

"Media Relations" is a course designed to help participants learn to exert their right to use the media to publicize events, activities and information more effectively.

Topics will include assessing organizational media needs, writing and "fine-tuning" news releases and public service announcements, establishing and maintaining contacts with members of news media, and preparing radio and television appearances.

The course will be taught by Allan Shapiro, associate producer of "Good Morning Washington," WJLA-TV.

"Media Relations" will be taught beginning April 8, Wednesdays 6-9 p.m. Fee is \$60.

"Mass Media--Communications Law" is a course designed to enable participants to recognize, understand and articulate some of the major legal issues in the field of law and mass communications.

Topics covered will include the First Amendment and prior restraint, obscenity, privacy, news gathering and journalists' privilege, fair trial and free press, regulation and the FCC, and advertising.

The course will be taught by Gerald M. Goldstein, trial attorney with the Office of General Counsel in the Federal Communications Commission.

"Mass Media--Communications Law" will be held on Thursdays from 6-9 p.m., beginning April 9. Fee is \$60.

"Basic Pasteup Methods" is a "hands-on" course covering many aspects of the fundamental pasteup techniques needed for constructing camera-ready mechanicals, including T-square and drafting board practice.

Students will learn to use pasteup tools skillfully, understanding pasteup terminology, constructing guide sheets, making up dummies, proper handling of art work, calculating proportions, forming

(continued on next page)

ANNUAL NAGC NATIONAL CONFERENCE DATES SET

Planning for the National Association of Government Communicators' annual conference in Washington, D.C., is underway.

The 1981 conference will be held October 29-30. The theme is "Communication in the 1980's: Meeting the Challenges."

According to Sara Torrence, conference chairwoman, the 1981 national NAGC meeting will be organized into plenary sessions and working sessions.

Outside speakers will address the entire conference in plenary sessions.

In the working sessions, smaller groups will discuss such topics as writing, editing, public affairs, management, practice and theory, career development, new technologies, and graphic arts/audiovisual.

Torrence may be reached at (301) 921-2721. She is inviting proposals for the various workshops.

FOOD GRADING COMMENTS REVIEWED

USDA's Food Safety & Quality Service has summarized the comments from last summer's food grading proposal.

More than 1,000 favored a change in USDA food grade standards. Less than 200 were against any changes.

The Southeast had the most comments, 386, with Floridians contributing 282.

Western region produced 273 comments, with Californians submitting 191 of those.

Midwest had 231 comments, with Iowa leading that region with 60.

Northeast accounted for 228 comments, with New York producing 77 of those.

Southwesterners submitted 118 comments, with Texans submitting 58 of them.

On the issue of consumer education, 119 commenters mentioned specific ways to reach consumers.

The most cited methods were use of television, radio, newspapers and point-of-purchase materials. There was also some support for education in schools and by the extension services.

Three regional workshops have been set by the Agricultural Communicators in Education.

Southern regional meeting will be held April 8-10 at Lexington, Ky., in the Lexington Hilton Hotel.

Contact is Don Springer, University of Kentucky.

Northeastern regional meeting will be held May 10-13 at Niagra-on-the-Lake, Ontario, Canada, in the Pillar and Post Inn.

Contact is Brad Schneller, Canadian Ministry of Agriculture & Food, Toronto.

Washington, D.C., regional spring workshop will be held May 21-22 in the National 4-H Center at Chevy Chase, Md.

Contacts are Chris and Larry Quinn.

Graduate School Courses -- continued

and reformatting publications, correcting and squaring up final camera copy, achieving neatness, giving instructions to the printer, and resolving miscellaneous paste-up problems.

The course will be taught by Dolores C. Burell of the U.S. Department of Justice.

"Basic Pasteup Methods" will be held on Saturdays from 9-12 a.m., beginning April 11. - Fee is \$60 plus \$30 for materials and tools.

"Introduction to Computer Graphics" is a new course designed to aid graphic artists in making career decisions and graphic arts managers in formulating organizational plans.

Topics to be covered include changes in graphics for printing, visual presentations and television; relevant computer systems, equipment and programming; and the changing role of the graphics manager, designer and production specialist who will use the new electronic tools.

The class includes discussions with experts in various aspects of the field and visits to local computer graphics facilities.

The course will be taught by Robert C. Southee, chief of the design and graphics division in the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce.

"Introduction to Computer Graphics" will be held on Tuesdays from 6-9 p.m., beginning April 7. Fee is \$40.

For more information about any of the four information courses, call 447-4419.

The International Center for Improvement of Maize and Wheat near Mexico City is seeking a science writer-editor-communications specialist.

Along with support to the total communications program--as one of four international staff specialists--the person will be on assignment for half or more time to the wheat program.

There is a heavy emphasis on production, but there must be interest in communications process and strategy.

The work includes editing of reports and technical bulletins, writing for popular publications, helping conceptualize multimedia training materials, building and servicing channels to and with outreach staff posted around the world, and communicating with plant breeders in developing nations.

Some international travel is involved.

There is an excellent package of fringe benefits, including language training--speaking and reading knowledge of Spanish eventually will be necessary.

At least five years of successful performance in extension or experiment station type agricultural communications is required for the position.

Master's degree in journalism or communication (or education) is essential, but may be waived in case of exceptional individual qualifications.

The position is one that Bob Kern (Iowa State University retired) served in until recently when he took a job in The Hague, Netherlands.

Anita Povich-Wilson (Hawaii) is in a parallel spot serving the maize program.

Chris Dowsell is communication coordinator. Write to him for more details or to submit resume to indicate interest.

Address is Centro Internacional De Mejoramiento De Maiz Y Trigo, Apdo. Postal 6-641, Londres 40, Mexico 6, D.F.

ATC TAKES CABLE TV LEAD

American Television & Communications Corp., a wholly owned subsidiary of Time Inc., has become No. 1 in the cable television industry, according to news reports.

ATC-owned or operated cable-TV systems exceeded 1.4 million subscribers in March, making ATC first in basic subscribers among all multiple system operators in the Nation.

Annual workshop and conference of the Southern Association of Information Officers of State Departments of Agriculture is set for July 26-28 in South Carolina.

The meeting will be held at St. John's Inn at Myrtle Beach, S.C.

Sonny Smith, chief information officer of the South Carolina Department of Agriculture will be the 1981 meeting host.

KENTUCKY STREAMLINES PRINTING & COPYING

The State of Kentucky has saved its taxpayers an estimated \$3 million in the first 18 months of a program to consolidate and modernize state government printing, copying and duplicating operations in the capital city of Frankfort.

The multi-million dollar savings and the on-going program are the result of a 1977 executive order to streamline state government reproduction operations.

There were 22 state-operated facilities in and around Frankfort, ranging in size from a one-person copy center to a 44-employee printing plant.

An independent consultant--hired to study thoroughly the state government's reproduction problems and needs--recommended creating a new Division of Printing and Duplicating, with all state reproduction centers under its direction and control.

The division was formed and took immediate action to solve its most pressing problems--replacing outmoded equipment and pulling together the widely-dispersed reproduction centers into a more cost-effective centralized operation.

Fourteen of the 22 print shops were closed. Printing operations, equipment and personnel were combined into three reproduction centers.

"Prior to consolidation and installation of new equipment, it took our print shops up to three months to produce a single job," Bob Lewis, division director, says. "Now we're able to provide a two-week turnaround time on normal work."

Lewis says his division will eventually also assume responsibility for microfilming and forms control.

"The centralization program created a division with both factual and fiscal accountability," Lewis says. "We think we're looking really good on both counts, but more important, we're saving the taxpayers money."

Publishing Center of USDA's Office of Governmental & Public Affairs has completed 80-page draft of a new farmers' bulletin entitled "Getting Started Farming on a Small Scale."

The bulletin is a cooperative effort, with USDA Science and Education Administration specialists Ovid Bay and Buel Lanpher lending their expertise.

Several land-grant university agricultural economics experts also have helped, according to George Holcomb, head of the project. They are from Kentucky, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and Pennsylvania.

The publication is being printed in reponse to the growing number of inquiries in USDA and state offices about how to get into farming, says Holcomb.

Holcomb also has developed a questionnaire for potential farmers.

That, too, is a cooperative effort with Science and Education Administration, Economics & Statistics Service and land-grant university people in several states helping.

The questionnaire, not yet in print, is called "Should You Try Farming?"

GPO MOVING TO ELECTRONIC PHOTOCOMPOSITION

The U.S. Government Printing Office is moving towards complete electronic photocomposition in its operations.

In a report to the Interagency Council on Printing and Publications Services, GPO officials described recent developments and future plans.

GPO has installed two communications links so that agencies with word processing systems can transmit data directly into an Atex Text Processing System.

It will accept 300-baud asynchronous data in ASCII code and also 2400-baud bysynch data in EBCDIC code.

GPO reminded the group "that GPO is not merely in the composition and printing business, but is creating, servicing or updating data bases."

GPO expects to complete its conversion to electronic photocomposition in 1982.

"Then, we expect that information transfer systems will accept data in many forms," said one GPO official, "and will provide such flexibility of output that users will be limited only by their imaginations in deciding what form to select."

A documentary film, "Land Use--A Moral Dilemma," produced by a southern Illinois resource conservation and development area, has become a national, and international, hit.

The 35-minute film, narrated by Eddie Albert of television fame, looks at the nation's agricultural production capabilities and reflects on past land use and resource attitudes.

The success of the film is revealed by over 100 showings throughout the State of Illinois, use in all 50 states and by recommendation for use in developing countries by the Lincoln Institute on International Land Policy (already used in Taiwan).

Joe Fasig, coordinator for the Shawnee Resource Conservation and Development Area, Marion, Ill., says the film is an outgrowth of two workshops on land use planning held at Southern Illinois University in cooperation with the continuing education program.

"After the second workshop, both of which were well attended," Fasig says, "the Land Utilization-Water Conservation Committee found they had been talking to the same people and were not reaching the ones who had to be involved in land use planning."

Television, radio and newspaper articles were considered, and discarded.

Prior to starting on the film, all available films were viewed by the LU-WC Committee to determine if their thoughts and ideas had already been used.

The committee got full backing from the Shawnee RC&D Area Council to produce the film.

A professional film producer and script writer was contracted, who worked closely with the LU-WC Committee in the production of the film.

Seventy plus farmers were contacted by telephone as possible interview participants in the film. Twenty were interviewed in person, 12 were filmed and 7 actually used in the film.

"The interviews with farmers who discussed the problems from their own perspective is especially effective," said a spokesman for the National Association of Conservation Districts. "The film is exceptionally well done."

"It fills a void in available information about the current problem of the conversion of agricultural land through urbanization and to other uses, the continu-

(continued in next column)

The 75th anniversary of the Meat Inspection Act is being recognized by USDA's Food Safety & Quality Service.

The Meat Inspection Act of 1906 was a landmark consumer protection law.

It gave USDA authority to insure that meat and meat products are safe and wholesome.

To help call attention to the anniversary, the Food Safety & Quality Service information staff has produced an anniversary information kit.

Thousands of copies of this kit have been distributed from Washington, D.C., and through the five regional information offices at Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, New York and San Francisco.

Anyone interested in getting a kit should contact the FSQS information staff in Washington or one of the regional information offices.

ing problem of excessive erosion, and the need to think about development of a new land ethic," the NACD spokesman said.

Already 55 copies of the film have been sold, at cost, to various organizations and institutions around the Nation.

Meanwhile, the 16 "loaner" films are in almost constant use.

Television stations in Illinois, Missouri and New Mexico have shown the film to their audiences during prime time.

The film has been recommended by the new U.S. Secretary of Agriculture for use by all state land use committees.

"This major accomplishment is an excellent example of the RC&D concept in action," Fasig points out with pride.

This is well illustrated by the fact that funding for production of the film was secured from 40 different organizations, with contributions ranging from \$25 to \$27,500.

One final note: The Shawnee RC&D group is planning a second film, "Food: The Abuse of Abundance," designed to generate dialogue among consumers and farmers about need for conserving land, water and human resources and for ecologically sound agriculture.

For a brochure describing the completed film, "Land Use--A Moral Dilemma," or for additional information, contact Joe Fasig, Coordinator, Shawnee Resource Conservation & Development Area, R.R. 6, Box 127-A, Marion, Ill. 62959, or call (618) 997-4415.
